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SUBJECT: REINVIGORATING PUBLIC DIPLOMACY CULTURAL AND  
SPORTS PROGRAMS

REFERENCE: STATE 222516

1. Summary: Cultural programming comprises an integral part of public diplomacy efforts in Canada, and the Mission greatly appreciates ECA and WHA/PD support for these efforts. Such programming reaches not just traditional audiences, but more importantly, youth, ethnic and religious minorities. (Canada is home to a growing Islamic population, of which a small number are known to have aimed to inflict harm on the U.S., a critical concern in a country which shares a 5,000-mile, porous border with the United States.) Through cultural programming, the post counters mass media, superficial portrayals of American culture, often offensive to certain minorities, with art forms that convey our human side, promote deeper understanding of American policies and the attitudes that shape them, raise awareness of U.S. diversity and its positive impact on our society, and reinforce the sense of shared values and shared histories that undergird our friendship with Canada. The modest public diplomacy staffing levels and funding at the Embassy and seven Consulates in Canada limit the Mission's ability to conduct independent cultural programming. Rather, collaborative efforts with Canadian cultural institutions, in which we augment programming they support logistically, work best. Responses to questions posed in reftel follow. End Summary.

2.

Q. WHICH OF YOUR MISSION OBJECTIVES BENEFITS FROM CULTURAL PROGRAMS OR COULD BE BETTER SUPPORTED BY CULTURAL PROGRAMS, INCLUDING SPORTS PROGRAMS? PLEASE BE SPECIFIC IN DESCRIBING HOW THESE PROGRAMS SUPPORT YOUR OBJECTIVES. FOR EXAMPLE: DO THEY CREATE AN EVENT THAT GETS EMBASSY ACCESS TO OTHERWISE INACCESSIBLE AUDIENCES, BUILD DIRECT PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR U.S. POLICY OBJECTIVES, OR CHALLENGE AND CHANGE NEGATIVE PUBLIC OPINION OR STEREOTYPES THAT THWART U.S. INTERESTS?

Post response:

Cultural programming supports the following Mission Canada MPP Themes  
--Prevention and Response to Terrorism (Counterterrorism)  
--Border Agreements (Homeland Security)  
--Close Ties with Allies and Friends (Regional Stability)  
--Environmental Protection (Social and Environment Issues)  
--International Public Opinion (Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs)

U.S. Mission Canada cultural programming, undertaken by the Embassy and seven Consulates across Canada's diverse regions, supports post's objectives in multiple ways, sometimes with specific, immediate impact, and other times with longer-term, attitudinal impact.

A few examples of how arts programming supports Mission objectives follow.

a) Countering Terrorism/Homeland Security-complementing dialogue with images:

While Canada plays a critical, major role in the war against terror, with its troops in Afghanistan and close border cooperation essential to the success of U.S. efforts to combat terrorist threats, the Canadian public continues to question U.S. views in balancing security measures against civil liberties, as well as the resources devoted to increased border security. With Canada's growing Moslem population including a small number of extremists who wish harm to the United States and are near enough to inflict it, buttressing Canadian will to counter terrorism is the Mission's top public diplomacy priority. The U.S. Embassy and Consulates have, since 9-11, focused public attention on the impact of 9-11 on U.S. perceptions and actions, and urged Canada's full-fledged efforts against the terrorist threat, through the Ambassador's speeches, U.S. speakers, videoconferences, and document outreach.

The exhibition of Joel Meyerowitz' photo series "After Ground Zero," displayed in conjunction with a University of British Columbia/Simon Fraser University joint videoconference in downtown Vancouver, and the traveling exhibition of the "Headlines of History" 9-11 paper show, displayed in six towns across Manitoba, with their graphic, emotion-evoking images, underscored the human suffering dimension, beyond the facts and figures, that underlie the profound change in the American psyche since attackers leveled the World Trade Towers. The images reached thousands of viewers, and the Headlines of History show is permanently displayed at the International Peace Garden on the Manitoba-North Dakota border. Mission Canada also supported the travel of a museum curator to Montreal to offer his perspectives on communicating the impact of 9-11 at a professional dialogue on documenting disasters.

b) Mutual Understanding-complementing arts with dialogue:

Canadians, particularly in metropolitan locales, enjoy a steady stream of American film, music, dance, and visual arts imported by commercial and non-profit arts organizations. The presence of American cultural products does not necessarily translate into understanding of American culture, however. Canadians commonly make many false assumptions about the U.S., e.g. that the U.S. is less embracing of diversity than Canada, or that U.S. culture is powered by greed, not pursuit of artistic excellence or community building. The U.S. Embassy and Consulates have partnered with Canadian organizations to enrich selected groups' understanding of American society and diversity, as expertly articulated by artists themselves. A few examples follow.

A Consulate Vancouver-organized program added two program days to the textile symposium visit of several Gee's Bend Quilters. The elderly African-American quilters shared their family histories and first-hand memories of the economic, political and social events that shaped their remote village of Gee's Bend in Alabama, from their ancestors' arrival and sale by slave traders to the aftermath of the Civil War, the trauma of the depression, the impact of FDR's New Deal on their town, the civil rights struggles of the mid-1900's, the somewhat sudden "discovery" of

their quilting craft by major American museums and curators in the 1990's, and the impact of the modern economy on their descendants. The women related how faith and their community have sustained them through difficult periods. African-Canadians, youth, journalists and artists in Vancouver, and, by videoconference, in Calgary, Winnipeg, Ottawa and Halifax, joined their spirit of gratitude and celebration, illustrated with a documentary on their quilts and capped by the women's moving gospel sing-along.

New York-based landscape artist April Gornick traveled to Halifax to personally interact with visitors to the Nova Scotia Art Gallery's exhibition of her work. American photographers featured in Montreal's Mois de la photo exhibition traveled to Montreal to participate in dialogue on their avant-garde art and its relation to society. The Mission provided travel grants to offset the artists' costs.

The Mission helped bring a Hopi potter to the Gardiner Museum of Ceramics' summer workshop series, adding to the Toronto public's visual appreciation of Hopi art a deepened understanding of the underlying philosophy and spiritualism.

Secondary students at an Ottawa Francophone high school and young vocalists from Ottawa and Montreal interacted directly with mezzo-soprano superstar Denyse Graves, who shared not only her passion for excellence as a vocalist but also stories of the determination, family and church support that led her from modest means to the pinnacle of opera stardom in a country that rewards perseverance. State Department Cultural Ambassador Graves and the Culture Connect office helped arrange this program prior to Graves' National Arts Center gala performance in Ottawa.

Master classes in Montreal by the Stephen Petronio Dance Company, supported with an honoraria grant from the Mission, offered young Canadians insights into the devotion, commitment and creativity of a renowned contemporary American dance troop. When the Houston Ballet performs in Montreal and Ottawa in April/May 2006, the Mission plans similar outreach in coordination with Canadian host organizations to stimulate the interest and imaginations of youth and dance students in this traditional art form and the Houston-based artists who keep it alive.

WHA/PD's support for the Tim Laughlin New Orleans Jazz Quartet to visit Canada (after Peru and Mexico) in October 2005 enabled the Embassy and Consulates in Toronto and Montreal to present quintessential New Orleans jazz with contemporary flair to university and secondary students, jazz aficionados, and some of the many Canadian volunteers, officials, and emergency personnel who rushed to the aid of Hurricane Katrina victims. Tim Laughlin and his quartet conveyed the timeless spirit of their hometown, while joining the Mission in thanking Canada for friendship in time of need.

#### c) Close Ties with Allies and Friends-institutional collaboration.

Canada rightly asserts its independence and distinctiveness from its large southern neighbor in respectful (and sometimes less respectful) debates on public policy. The discussion of Canada-U.S.

contrasts often morphs into perceived diverging values, to the point where some polls of Canadian youth indicate they consider the United States a greater threat to their country than China is. The Mission places a priority on countering such perceptions with genuine dialogue on the historical bases for our separate tracks of development, but in the context of the tremendous common values we share, namely, a respect for the rights and dignity of the individual, the rights of citizens to choose their political leaders, and freedom of speech, religion and association. The Mission has supported several efforts to highlight for the Canadian public our shared histories. A few examples follow.

The Embassy partnered with the National Library of Canada to present and publicize an exhibit of archival books, manuscripts, maps, posters, and artworks that illustrated the cross-border journeys, communications and cooperation that have helped build our countries and cultures. Research librarian Jan Cellucci co-curated the "On the Road" exhibit.

The Embassy supported an exchange of documents and production of microfilm of original manuscripts held by the Massachusetts Historical Society to enrich the Library and Archives Canada's ability to interpret the colonial period political, economic, and social interaction between eastern Canada and the northeastern (U.S.) colonies. The material will help balance the New France digitization project materials, undertaken in coordination with the National Library of France, in describing Canada's development and relations with what would become the United States.

International Partnership Among Museums grants have enabled Canadian institutions to present to the public a) timeline and cross-border migration displays developed between Pier 21 Museum in Halifax and the Ellis Island Museum; b) exhibits and school curriculum to compare and contrast approaches to the British colonial power by colonies in what is now the United States and in then-British Canada during the revolutionary war period, to be undertaken by the Chateau Ramezay Museum in Montreal and Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia.

13.

10. WHAT KIND OF SPECIFIC CULTURAL OR SPORTS PROGRAMS OR INITIATIVES ARE, OR WOULD BE, MOST EFFECTIVE IN SUPPORTING THOSE OBJECTIVES? PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR ASSESSMENT OF THE RELATIVE USEFULNESS OF VISUAL ARTS PROGRAMS (EXHIBITIONS, PAPER SHOWS), PERFORMING ARTS ACTIVITIES (MUSIC, THEATER, DANCE), FILM AND VIDEO PROGRAMS, AND SPORTS PROGRAMS. PLEASE ADDRESS ALSO THE VALUE OF INDEPENDENT SHOWS OR PERFORMANCES, PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE OR INSTITUTION-TO-INSTITUTION EXCHANGES, AND BROADCAST CULTURAL INFORMATION/EVENTS. IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS NOT COVERED ABOVE, PLEASE INCLUDE THEM.

Post response:

The usefulness of cultural programming tools relies less on the media/genre and more on the message they convey. As noted above, the post has both enhanced dialogue with visual arts exhibits, and conversely, enhanced music and dance performances with dialogue. With Halifax hosting the 2014 Commonwealth games and Vancouver hosting the 2010 Olympic games, programming sports figures may work well in coming years. In general, the post seeks opportunities to engage Canadians in direct interaction with artists, speakers, and Embassy/Consulates/USG officials

to increase support for U.S. policies (counterterrorism, regional security), and to overcome misconceptions and stereotypes of U.S. government and society that impede progress on MPP goals. Exhibits, paper shows, cultural performances, workshops, and institutional linkages all support these objectives.

14.

1Q. WHAT CONSTRAINTS DOES YOUR MISSION FACE IN EFFECTIVELY UTILIZING CULTURAL, ARTS, AND SPORTS PROGRAMS? ARE THERE ART FORMS, SPORTS, OR CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS THAT DO NOT ENGAGE AUDIENCES IN YOUR COUNTRY? ARE THERE OTHER CONSTRAINTS THAT LIMIT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THESE KINDS OF PROGRAMS IN YOUR COUNTRY? DO YOU FACE INTERNAL STAFFING OR FUNDING CONSTRAINTS?

Post response:

Canadians enjoy a wide range of American cultural expressions. The post can add value to existing cultural exchange by stimulating awareness of MPP issues through art, challenging stereotypes through interaction with artists, and building awareness of shared values and interests through art forms not commonly accessed via mass culture products. However, public diplomacy staffing, spread thinly across the Mission's eight locations, and funding limit the amount and kind of cultural programming the post can undertake.

The Mission regrets that Washington funding for Cultural Specialists, who might engage in extensive dialogue with youth and faculty audiences at art institutions, have been exhausted or unavailable for recent Canada requests. We also regret that the Festival Fund, which once supported U.S. artist participation at overseas festivals, has been discontinued. These kinds of programs could contribute substantially to the Mission's efforts to influence target audiences.

15.

1Q. HOW HAVE YOU BEEN ABLE TO PARTNER WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN YOUR COUNTRY TO SPONSOR CULTURAL / SPORTS EVENTS, OR TO OVERCOME RESOURCE (STAFF AND FUNDING) CONSTRAINTS? PLEASE INCLUDE SPECIFIC EXAMPLES.

Post response:

Per the examples in paragraph 2 above, the post's cultural programming takes place primarily in collaboration with the presentations or projects of Canadian cultural institutions. The post's budget and staffing do not generally support coverage of professional performance fees or rental of exhibition venues, but can sometimes offset artists' travel costs, master class honoraria or associated costs to involve youth audiences with visiting artists. In some cases, the post co-hosts representational events to promote dialogue between target audience members and visiting artists.

Wilkins